

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY

SUMMARY: EQUITABLE MODERN GRID

The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) issued an Interim Decision termed the Framework for an Equitable Modern Grid (Framework) in Docket No. 17-12-03 on October 2, 2019. The Framework outlines a comprehensive, overarching planning process for equitably modernizing the electric grid in Connecticut, including near-term (addressed in the next two years) topics for further investigation.

The Framework has four objectives derived from the clear policy directive and leadership of both the General Assembly over the past decade, as first expressed in Public Act 11-80, An Act Concerning the Establishment of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and Planning for Connecticut's Energy Future,¹ and Governor Lamont, as demonstrated in Executive Order No. 3:²

The Framework endeavors to maximize the benefits associated with the energy policies adopted by State policymakers to deliver a clean and prosperous Connecticut by addressing barriers to the cost-effective proliferation of these policies. PURA is keenly aware of the cost of electricity in the State and seeks to provide all customers with net benefits through this Framework, explicitly addressing the central theme of energy affordability first, and foremost, and leveraging the principles of competition throughout.

1 Public Act 11-80, An Act Concerning the Establishment of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and Planning for Connecticut's Energy Future (<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/act/pa/pdf/2011PA-00080-R00SB-01243-PA.pdf>).

2 Executive Order No. 3, Governor Ned Lamont, dated September 3, 2019 (<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-3.pdf?la=en>).

A. NEAR-TERM TOPICS

PURA opened investigations (17-12-03REXX) into the following near-term topics on October 4, 2019:

Phase II

RE01	Energy Affordability
RE02	Advanced Metering Infrastructure
RE03	Electric Storage
RE04	Zero Emission Vehicles
RE05	Innovative Technology Applications and Programs (Innovation Pilots)
RE06	Interconnection Standards and Practices

PURA identified opportunities for each topic to deliver on the objectives of the Framework, namely:

Energy Affordability

- Connecticut is 48th in electric rates, but 24th in energy expenditures per capita.
- Addressing residential energy affordability can reduce rates for all customers.
- Addressing energy affordability for commercial and industrial customers helps retain businesses in and attract businesses to Connecticut.

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)

- AMI can cost-effectively provide additional value, if implemented strategically.
- AMI can help facilitate greater deployment and integration of DERs, such as zero emission vehicles, solar PV, electric storage, and renewable thermal technologies.

Electric Storage

- The unique characteristic of electric storage technologies and applications is that each can provide multiple value streams, including: peak shaving; supporting the deployment of renewable energy; customer, local, and community resilience; ancillary services; and, avoiding or deferring distribution system upgrades.

Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs)

- ZEVs are crucial to meeting Connecticut's economy-wide decarbonization goals.
- ZEVs create technical and cost challenges for the electric distribution system, but also provide opportunities through increased electricity sales.

Innovation Pilots

- Innovation is needed to cost-effectively achieve the objectives of the Framework.
- Low-risk pathways can encourage innovation and competition while also minimizing customers' financial exposure.

Interconnection Standards and Practices

- Effective and efficient interconnection standards and practices facilitates the deployment of DERs and technology uses like emergency backup power from solar PV plus electric storage systems.

B. PROCESS

PURA is holding several Public Forums and Solutions Days to discuss innovative solutions and best practices on each of the near-term topics above, see Table 1. The Authority will continue to solicit actively the participation of product developers and solutions providers, non-profit organizations and advocates, regional and national experts, state and federal agencies, and all other Connecticut stakeholders.

PURA will offer all interested stakeholders the opportunity to submit formally their proposed solution(s). Based on the proposed solution(s), PURA will create a straw proposal for stakeholder comment and will subsequently issue a draft decision, followed by a final decision. PURA will issue a final decision in each docket within one and half years of the docket opening.

Table 1: Procedural Dates
(Hyperlinks to CT-N recordings)

PROCEEDING	SOLUTIONS DAYS / PUBLIC FORUMS		
	HELD		CONFIRMED
RE01 – Energy Affordability	November 1st (Residential)	-	-
RE02 – Advanced Metering Infrastructure	November 5th	-	December 17 th
RE03 – Electric Storage	November 14th	November 15th	-
RE04 – Zero Emission Vehicles	November 22nd	-	December 20 th
RE05 – Innovation Pilots	-	-	December 13 th
RE06 – Interconnection Standards	November 21 st	-	December 10 th

PURA will open further investigations into the following near-term topics:

Phase III – Beginning in the first half of 2020

- RE07 Non-Wires Alternatives
- RE08 Resilience and Reliability Standards and Programs
- RE09 Distributed Energy Resource Analysis and Program Reviews

Phase IV – Beginning at the completion of DEEP's IRP / RE015

- RE010 Building Blocks of Resource Adequacy and Clean Electric Supply
- RE011 New Rate Designs

The Framework and near-term topics will culminate in an Integrated Distribution System Plan submitted to PURA by the electric distribution companies by July 1, 2022.